



## What Makes You Tick?

### Have You Thought About What Drives Your Life?

Back when I was much younger, watches did not just run on their own, you had to wind them up. They had a mainspring that had to be twisted with a stem. The mainspring would gradually release and turn various gears at a steady rate, one of the gears being the escapement which would cause the moving of the hand of the watch at a pace that showed the correct time. The escapement made a soft ticking sound which resulted in the expression, "What makes you tick". In other words, what is it that drives your life, what makes you who you are? If I were to ask you that question, what would be your response? For some it is love and friendship. Others it is work, food, relaxation and some sort of hobby. It could be education, the pursuit of wealth, popularity or freedom from pain. Each of us has an escapement, a mechanism that motivates us, that pushes us along. The Bible says we have one of two escapements, and it really is one or the other. They are the World or the Kingdom of God. Today we will consider the World.

There is a word used in the Greek New Testament that is translated almost always as world and it is used often. It is Kosmos or Cosmos. Carl Sagan famously used the term as the title of his series that promoted a Godless view of the universe. Cosmos has a variety of meanings, and it is important to realize that world does not always indicate the same thing when it is in the New Testament. Sometimes cosmos or world has the idea of the entire universe, the stars, sky and everything else. **"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands."** (Acts 17:24 NIV) The Apostle Paul also uses world in this way. **For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.** (Romans 1:20 NIV) Other times it is clearly just this planet. **By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.** (2 Peter 3:6 NIV) Often though "world" describes the people living on this planet...all the people. **Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned—** (Romans 5:12 NIV) We use world this same way now. You might be talking about the planet or the people living on the planet and world would be the word you use in either case. There is though a unique way the Bible utilized the term world that is much more specialized and crucial to consider.

The Apostle John, who used the term world in much the same way as Jesus, says that the world is to be rejected. **Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world.** (1 John 2:15-16 NIV) What we have here is a profound understanding of the sort of environment we actually occupy. There is deep and pervasive opposition to God that promotes reckless disobedience to what is right and good. Sinful longings, lust and the disregard of God flow from this environment, what John calls the world. It is the entity at work that pushes against God and promotes corruption, that hates Him and those who follow Him. In this case the world is not the globe, nor everyone. It is the mass that has come against Jesus. Talking about His Disciples, Jesus made this statement in prayer. **I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as**

**I am not of it.** (John 17:14-16 NIV) Speaking directly to His disciples, Jesus had this to say about this subsystem of His creation. **"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.** (John 15:18-19 NIV)

How do we label this? What sort of term do we use to describe what Jesus and the New Testament writers warn us to reject? We simply use the term they use. The world. John the Apostle insists we must reject altogether the world as we noted above. **Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.** (1 John 2:15 NIV) Keep in mind, we are now talking about that united front of all that opposes Jesus and hates God. James, the brother of Jesus had strong words for you as you take stock of the world. **You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.** (James 4:4 NIV) Adultery? That is how James thinks of any alliance you might form with the world. It is like cheating on your spouse. Only in this case, the one who loves you and trusts you with that love is God.

Lest we think the world is just a nebulous, scattered smattering of people who do not like God, carefully consider what John the Apostle and Jesus say about the world. **We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.** (1 John 5:19 NIV) **Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.** (John 12:31 NIV) The world has its leader; the devil and it is organized against God. The goal is to turn all who will against Jesus and induce sin of every sort. Jesus admits that Satan has been successful at it but says the devil will face a certain fate. **Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come!** (Matthew 18:7 NIV) Yet the promise of God is the world will not always attack God's people, will not always wreck their lives or take their joy and peace from them. The world, along with the devil will one day end. **The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.** (1 John 2:17 NIV)

The world is not some ugly, dysfunctional wreck that is easily rejected. It is attractive, sharp, desirable. Paul famously at the end of his life, as he awaited his execution, noted that one of his friends, Demas, had deserted him because he loved the world. **Do your best to come to me quickly, for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica.** (2 Timothy 4:9-10a NIV) Paul was clearly counting on Demas for support but Demas felt the pull of the world and left him. I cannot imagine the world seemed insidious or ugly to Demas; the world was attractive, comforting, intriguing and it won Demas's heart.

The same was true of the ancient King Hezekiah. After two great moral and spiritual victories that must have felt lovely to him, victories that clearly came from God, Hezekiah felt the same allure of the world. The Lord had rescued his nation from near certain annihilation at the hands of the mighty Assyrians and also saved Hezekiah from a deadly illness and yet loyalty to his Savior was undercut by the magical pull of the world. Envoys from the up and rising Babylonian nation came to Hezekiah with greetings from their king. Rather than being protective of himself and his people, Hezekiah threw all caution to the wind and warmly welcomed the Babylonians to Jerusalem. He showed them all his wealth and made them feel at home. This, despite the fact that the Babylonians were a pagan and cruel country that had no love for God or interest in following Him. They were the world and Hezekiah fell for their attractiveness. God through the prophet Isaiah later warned Hezekiah of what a horrible fate awaited the people of Jerusalem because Hezekiah befriended the Babylonians. They would destroy Jerusalem and massacre the people with only a remnant surviving. The world is "super cool" and its power to attract you is undeniable. The world though, led by Satan, has no love for you. It is bent on your destruction. However Jesus makes this promise to you. **"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."** (John 16:33 NIV) With every decision, its either God or the world. Choose wisely. Make sure you understand the ramifications of what you decide. What makes you tick? Next time we will talk about the other escapement, the Kingdom of God.